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Title: Need to expedite operation of cargo services at Madurai Airport, Tamil Nadu and take measures for further development of the Airport.

SHRI R. GOPALAKRISHNAN (MADURAI): The Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu granted Rs. 200 crore for four-laning of the Outer Ring Road of Madurai. Fulfilling the infrastructure needs of Madurai City can be done by developing Madurai Airport. It will be a great boon to the City. All clearances for International Cargo operations except Custom Clearance, at Madurai were given but the cargo operations are yet to be started. Presently, the growers of vegetable, flowers and fruits in Madurai region depend on the far-off Tiruchirappalli, Coimbatore and Thiruvananthapuram Airports involving unnecessary transport expenses and chance of damages to perishable items. Bilateral air services agreements are to be made with Malaysia, Singapore and UAE specifically meant for Madurai Airport. The existing runway should be expanded from 7500 ft to 10000 ft for upgradation. These steps will usher in development of Madurai.

Therefore, I urge upon the Union Government to expedite operation of cargo services and to take up necessary steps for further development of Madurai Airport in the public interest.